Furby Family History

Mid Year Report June 1988

First of all I would like to thank all those who have supplied me with information on Furby family history during the past year. This has been very helpful in building up the total picture.

I was also pleased to be able to make contact with the Furbys in California who are descendents of Charles Edwin Furby who emigrated there in 1888. Charles Edwin was the cousin of my grandfather John William.

I have discovered two Furbys in Southport,Merseyside and written to them. One has replied, but is a descendent of north-east Furbys.

During the last six months I have been unable to get more than two trips to London and have spent this searching early registers in St. Catherines House. These visits concentrated on alternants e.g. Firby, which has been known to have been used by at least one member of our family.

At present one John Furby appears most likely to be our common ancestor. This is a John William Furby who died in 1844 at St. Bartholomews Hospital,West London (with dropsy). His birth year works out to be 1787. I note that this conflicts with dates contained in copies of Graces notes I have. Here she gives a date of 1790 for Johns birth, 1811 for his marriage and pre 1837 for his death. These dates are shown on what appears to be the latest tree of hers. If anyone has any support information for any of these dates I would be pleased to hear from them.

Maybe like me at first glance, Grace discounted this John (William) because of the middle name? However, there is at least one occasion (the marriage of son James Samual Furby in 1843) where John is referred to as John William. First of all I thought this was an error on the certificate but having spent alot of time searching for other possible John deaths I decided to examine this possibility and assume he may sometimes have used this middle name like others after him. Again if anyone can find anything to back this up, it would be very helpful.

What is really needed now is a search through census returns and parish registers to try and get any record of John & Sarah & family. The census returns would say where they came from and could provide the missing link to the previous generation. A parish register marriage record for John & Sarah should give the name of Johns father. If anyone is able to get to London regularly to do some research I could provide them with likely dates and places etc. and let them know "the system". Help in this area would be particularly useful because of the size of the task.

I have been taking the opportunity to start computerizing my Furby family history records in my "spare time" with the help of Sue, my wife. This is a big job itself but will provide some very powerful aids in matching/searching for individuals. Currently the statistics are as follows:-

Source	Furby Records
St.Catherines House	569
St.Catherines House (name alternants)	261
International Genealogical Index	432
Probate Registers	48
Parish Registers	5
Census Returns	32
Directories	79

An interesting spin-off from this is a list of the descendents of John & Sarah, a copy of which is attached. You should all be on this, though it is of course not complete. Each descendent has a unique number which shows their descendency from John & Sarah e.g. I am a descendent of Johns first child therefore my number starts with "1" and is 17741. My great grandfather was the seventh child hence the second digit is "7". The total number of digits is the number of generations I am from John. Additions to the family like my nephew born last year have their parents number plus their own child number at the end. If we manage to get further back then a digit is added to the beginning of our numbers.

A small piece of Furby family history has recently been rediscovered by my aunt - Margaret Ryan (nee Furby). A letter has been found from the President of the London Midland & Scottish Railway Company, dated January 1927 and addressed to my grandfather John William Furby. The letter had accompanied a medal which he had received for being a loyal citizen during the sucessful resistance to the "menace to the constitution" in May 1926. No one knows what happened to the medal.

There is still as yet no evidence of any link between our Furbys originating in the south-east of England and those in the north-east, who are by far the majority. It may well be that the two have independent origins. Similarly the link across the channnel is still unproven in the case of our Furbys.